POPULAR MISCONCEPTIONS OF THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

By

W. R. HUNTINGTON

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POPULAR MISCONCEPTIONS

OF

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH

BRIEFS ON RELIGION

BY WILLIAM R. HUNTINGTON, D.D.

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BY

DR. WILLIAM REED HUNTINGTON

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I joy, dear Mother, when I view
Thy perfect lineaments, and hue
Both sweet and bright;
Beauty in thee takes up her place,
And dates her letters from thy face
When she doth write.

A fine aspéct in fit array,
Neither too mean, nor yet too gay,
Shows who is best:
Outlandish looks may not compare;
For all they either painted are,
Or else undrest.

But, dearest Mother, (what those miss,)
The mean thy praise and glory is,
And long may be.
Blessed be God, whose love it was
To double-moat thee with his grace,
And none but thee.

—*George Herbert.*

I.

THAT IT MAGNIFIES EMPTY FORMS AND CEREMONIES.

I.

THAT IT MAGNIFIES EMPTY FORMS AND CEREMONIES.

Evidently the weight of the condemnation lies in the word "empty," for it can scarcely be contended that form is, of itself, an evil. Form is one of the ordinances of the Creator, and to escape it we should have to take leave not of our senses only, but of our very bodies themselves. Nature is full of forms; the wild flower, the crystal, the forest tree, the insect's wing—everything, from the cloud to the continent, has figure. Art, the imitator and interpreter of Nature, deals almost exclusively with forms, even color being chiefly serviceable as defining form. Society, like a vine severed from its trellis, would fall to ruin without forms, the forms of friendly intercourse, the good-mornings and good-bys of daily life.

Is there any sound reason for exempting religion from this universal principle? Shall form attend us at every single step we take, and then suddenly be expected to quit us the moment we cross the threshold of the sanctuary? To rule out form from the holy place is tantamount to ruling it out from all places, which in its turn would be like declaring chaos a more excellent thing than cosmos, for of chaos, and of chaos only, is it written that it was "without form."

But it is scarcely necessary to pursue this line of thought.

Every reasonable person will acknowledge that "when two or three are gathered together" for purposes of worship, some sort of form is essential to their doing what they do in concert. Take the extreme case, or what is supposed to be the extreme case, of the Society of Friends. It is often asserted that, whatever may be the fact with regard to other Christians, the Friends, at least, are emancipated from forms of worship altogether. But are they? The silence which prevails at their meetings is of the nature of preparation, and a very excellent preparation it is; few things in life are better than stillness; but the common prayer, the united supplication, begins only when one of the persons present opens his lips to speak; the others are then given a ground-work of agreement, a scaffolding of intelligible thought upon which they can stand together.

It is the same thing in any assembly which has, what the Friends have not, some one person definitely appointed to lead the devotions of the rest. This leader or spokesman makes his off-hand form and turns it over to his fellow-worshippers for immediate use. Theoretically each listener thereupon adopts what he hears as his own; but, really, how fares it with this suddenly prepared form? Why, here, perhaps, is one worshipper who fills the cup to the brim with the wine of his devotion, there another who fills it partly full, and, again, yonder a third, from whose spiritual grasp it passes as empty as it came to him.

So, then, it is plain that the real ground for disparaging the devotional forms of the Episcopal Church cannot be the fact that they are forms, nor yet that

they are empty forms, seeing that all Christians are committed to forms which may, under some circumstances, be empty ;—what, then, is it? Must it not be the fixedness of the forms that provokes the criticism —the circumstance of their being printed in a book and repeated with slight change from day to day and from year to year? Undoubtedly yes ; and to this point, therefore, I shall address myself.

My wish is to present the case for liturgical worship briefly, fairly, and without passion. I shall not attempt to prove that no other sort of worship is acceptable to Almighty God, nor shall I be at pains to deny that there are times and occasions when extemporized forms of devotion may serve the purpose of a gathered assembly even better than precomposed ones. What I do wish to maintain is that, in the long run, the interests of religion are likely to be better served by our having our worship liturgically rendered than by having it extemporized ; that the set forms, the established ways, are, on the whole, the best.

A short and easy way of arriving at my conclusion would be to employ what one might call the argument from imitation, and to reason that because so many congregations of Christians, once eloquent in their denunciation of set forms, are now constantly incorporating fragments from the Book of Common Prayer into their Sunday worship, it must be that the liturgical fashion is the wiser.

But instead of taking this irritating line, I would press, rather, the positive arguments in favor of liturgical worship. Prominent among these is the great antiquity of the usage. Only think of the hundreds of years during which the Christian Church followed

no other custom! Or, if you choose to go back beyond the beginnings of the Christian to the history of the Jewish Church, consider what an elaborate ritual that was which God prescribed for tabernacle and temple. It is common to bar out the appeal to Jewish precedent on the ground that that whole system was superseded by the coming in of the Gospel of Christ. Still, when we remember that our Lord Himself frequented the temple-worship, and that the apostles did the same as they had opportunity, it is tolerably safe to infer that they saw nothing adverse to the principles of the new faith in a beautiful liturgical service as such.

But waiving this point, the argument is sufficiently strong when based on Christian usage only. The precise measure of antiquity that attaches to the "Apostolic liturgies," so called, it may be difficult to determine, but that they can be traced back to a very early period of Christian history nobody disputes, and before we have sailed very far down the stream of the Church's life we find liturgical worship universal.

In reply to this argument from antiquity, it may be urged that the very fact of present dissent on the part of a large fraction of Christendom from a usage once universal proves that there must have been good ground for change. Why, for instance, has so considerable a minority of the people of England, ever since Queen Elizabeth's day, refused to conform to the worship of the national church? I might answer that the objections of the early Puritans stood not so much against a liturgy as such, as they did against the particular liturgy which was urged on their acceptance. They would have been well content with a prayer-book,

could it have been one of their own making. Baxter, in some respects the greatest of the Puritans, offered to make a liturgy; and did so in three weeks' time. It is needless to add that his work survives only as a curiosity of literature. Liturgies are not made in that way. Moreover, I might answer that, in the light of experience, it is evident that had the English rulers aimed at a less rigid *uni*formity than they did, they might have secured a much wider *con*formity. But instead of availing myself of these possible replies, I would rather admit frankly that there is force, real force, in this counter-argument, and that the wide adoption by many of the reformed communities of the extemporary mode of worship does prove that that method has certain excellencies and certain advantages of its own. The question is, Which system has the preponderating advantages? or, as I put it before, Under which system are the public interests of religion, in the long run, more likely to be well served? It may be true that your man of rare abilities, endowed like Barnabas with singular gifts of the Holy Ghost, and possessed like Apollos of an extraordinary power of religious utterance, could lift a congregation on the wings of prayer more effectually with his extemporized form than they would commonly be lifted by the Church service. I do not say that such would always be the case; I say that conceivably it might be the case. But supposing it to be so, what then? Every congregation cannot have a Barnabas or an Apollos to lead its worship. The proportion of such bright particular stars in the firmament of any Christian denomination is small. In considering the merits of a system which undertakes to meet and minister to the needs

of large bodies of men, we are bound to consider what will be best on the whole. And even in the case of the highly endowed leaders of extemporary worship, it is commonly more the personal magnetism of the individual and the subtle power of his bodily presence that produce the effect, than it is a positive superiority in the form which he provides for the people's use. Take any one of the published volumes of extemporaneous prayers which have within the last ten or twenty years been given to the world, such as Beecher's or Parker's or Dawson's, and compare them with the prayers of the Church service. I will venture to say that there is no one of any taste or judgment, no matter what his denominational belongings, who would not say, after making the comparison: "If I must have the same prayers every Sunday, give me the plain majesty, the dignified simplicity, the gentleness and sweetness of the Church prayers, rather than these eloquent—yes, too eloquent addresses to the throne of grace."

Another positive argument in favor of liturgical worship is its comprehensiveness. No matter how large the mind, how warm the heart, how wide the sympathies of the maker of the extemporized form, he would be more than human if he succeeded in remembering and providing for the needs of all. But what human want can be named that does not find expression in the English Litany? Some of the most touching and tender of the petitions are such as you will never hear from one year's end to another from the lips of any extemporizer of forms. And yet how hard it would be to give them up!

Again, a positive advantage may be claimed for liturgical worship on the score that it cultivates rever-

ence and reverential ways. There can, of course, be no genuine worship without reverence. The adoring soul looks up. Coarse familiarity with the Almighty, whatever else it may be, is not prayer. The liturgy is a constant safeguard against irreverence of speech, and, so far as suggestion can go, it is also a preventive of irreverence in bearing and manner. It is easy to say that postures and attitudes are of no account in matters spiritual, and it is perfectly true that they are sometimes made of too much account. But our Maker has lodged the spirit in the body; we are creatures of association, and, whether we will or no, we feel the influence of reverent ways to our good and the influence of irreverent ways to our hurt. You enter, let us suppose, a congregation after the service has begun, and you find the people evidently in an attitude of prayer. It makes an impression. You enter another congregation and you find it necessary to wait a minute or two before you can be quite sure whether the people are engaged in prayer or not. This also makes an impression. Now I will not claim any more real devotion for the first congregation than one of its own members might be disposed to claim for the second; I merely suggest that possibly you would find yourself more disposed to seriousness of feeling, more readily thrown into the devotional mood, the temper of worship, in the one case than in the other. The Episcopal Church accounts reverence to be one of the indispensable foundation-stones of noble character; and so holding, she is willing to run some risk of formalism rather than not do all she can to foster in young and old the spirit that in humility adores.

So much for "forms;" a few words now as to "cer-

emonies." "Empty forms and ceremonies" were the two things into which we undertook to look. When people speak of "the forms and ceremonies of the Church," they commonly mean by the "forms" the prayers and other spoken portions of the worship, and by the "ceremonies" the ritual acts, such as the changes of posture on the part of minister and people, bowing at the name of Jesus, the sign of the cross in Holy Baptism, and the like.

With regard to these matters I may say that the general mind of this Church finds excellent expression in one of the paragraphs prefixed to the Prayer Book of the Church of England. The passage is entitled, "Of Ceremonies, why some be abolished and some retained," and very full of good, sound common sense it is. It was written at a time when the rough weather of the Reformation was by no means over, and in every sentence we seem to see the pilot tightening his grip upon the wheel, determined that the ship shall not swerve in either direction from the chosen track.

"Whereas in this our time," the writer says, "the minds of men are so diverse that some think it a great matter of conscience to depart from the least of their ceremonies, they be so addicted to their old customs; and again, on the other side, some be so new-fangled that they would innovate all things, and so despise the old that nothing can like them but that is new; it was thought expedient not so much to have respect how to please and satisfy either of these parties, as how to please God and profit them both. And yet, lest any man should be offended whom good reason might satisfy, here be certain causes rendered why some of the accustomed ceremonies be put away and some retained."

The writer then goes on to give the reasons that had weighed with the Reformers in this matter of discriminating. The ceremonies discarded were those which either "did weary by their multitude," or confound and darken by their obscurity, the sacred meaning they had been intended to illustrate. Of those retained, he declares that "they be neither dark nor dumb ceremonies, but are so set forth that every man may understand what they do mean, and to what use they do serve." He closes with the following large-minded and philosophic reflection: "In these our doings we condemn no other nations, nor prescribe anything but to our own people only, for we think it convenient that every country should use such ceremonies as they shall think best to the setting forth God's honor and glory . . . without error or superstition; and that they should put away other things which, from time to time, they perceive to be most abused, as in men's ordinances it often chanceth diversely in divers countries."

Following out the spirit of this ancient preamble, the framers of our American Prayer Book went further still in the direction of conciliation and concession. Take, for example, one of the two or three ceremonial acts to which I just now made reference, the sign of the cross in Baptism. In the Church of England this is strictly required, but if you will examine the baptismal service of the American Prayer Book you will find in the paragraph of directions, or "rubric," as it is technically called, which accompanies the words of Baptism, the following words: "*If those who present the infant shall desire the sign of the cross to be omitted, although the Church knows no worthy cause of scruple concerning the same, yet in that case the Minister may*

omit that part of the above which follows the immersion or the pouring of water on the infant."

And what has been the result of this wise concession which the English Church never could see its way to making? Simply what might have been expected. Nobody ever asks to have the sign of the cross omitted. I say "nobody;" of course I am speaking generally. I never knew of an instance in my own experience, and do not remember ever to have heard of one. The moment the ceremonial act was put upon its proper basis, as a thing indifferent in itself, but still beautiful and fitting as an emblem, that moment all objections to the use of it vanished. So long as the sign of the cross was superstitiously regarded as possessing a special efficacy of its own, so long the scruple about using it had force, but no longer.

Similar observations might be made with regard to the other ceremonial usage I mentioned, that of bowing at the name of Jesus. In the Episcopal Church of this country there is no law upon the point whatsoever. It is wholly a matter of personal preference. Some persons bow the head at the name of Jesus when it occurs in the Creed, and not at other times. Others, with more consistency, as it would seem, make the same sign of reverence whenever the sacred name occurs, whether in the reading of the Scriptures or in common conversation. Others still, who are not satisfied with the reasons commonly assigned for the custom, refrain from observing it altogether. The Church has no word of reproof for this one, that one, or the other; it is a thing indifferent, upon which she has not pronounced and does not care to pronounce. These are but detached illustrations of a general principle to

which we may find ourselves returning later on when we come to consider the relations of this Church of the English-speaking race to the Church of Rome. For the present it suffices to have shown that the users of forms are not necessarily formalists, nor the respecters of ritual necessarily ritualists. Form and ceremony have their place, a secondary place no doubt, but still a place. They are the manners of religion, and though we be as yet, while this earth-life lasts, only in the outer courts of the palace of the Great King, it cannot be amiss for us to bear ourselves as those might do who hoped one day to stand before the throne. Meanwhile this charge of emptiness need trouble us not at all, for it is of the very nature of a form, whether devotional or ceremonial, that it be empty until some one fills it. An outline sketch is an empty form; the artist, so the phrase runs, "fills it in." A basket is an empty form of wicker-work; the gardener fills it with roses. The water-pots at Cana in Galilee were empty forms, until the servants filled them at the word of Christ, and then they ran with wine. And even so a liturgy is an empty form, but the man who worships in spirit and in truth may fill it with his heart.

II.

THAT IT KNOWS NOTHING OF A CHANGE OF HEART.

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Our notions as to the necessity of "a change of heart" if men would be rightly religious, inevitably take color from our previous estimate of what "Nature" can and does accomplish for us.

Understood in one sense, "natural" is an epithet of praise; understood in another sense, it carries a suggestion of disparagement. As contrasted either with what is *un*natural or with what is artificial, "the natural" seems praiseworthy; but as contrasted with what is "spiritual," we do not hesitate to call "the natural" inferior. For instance, we praise a person's manners because they are natural, not affected; we praise his literary style because it is natural, not stilted or overstrained; we say of a story that it is a good one because naturally told; and we commend an artist because his statue, or his picture, is true to nature. But then, on the other hand, when we see one of two men who have been put under equal provocation lose his temper, while the other keeps his, though we may charitably seek to excuse the first by saying of his lapse that it was at least natural; "natural" would be the very last epithet we should dream of applying to the other, for we should feel in our hearts that in his case there had been a manifestation of something better

and stronger than Nature. The man's act of self-control has brought us into the region of the spiritual, and what we are witnessing is a conquest over Nature. So then, while we see that there is plainly something beneath the natural, namely, the unnatural, there is also something above the natural, namely, the spiritual.

The teaching of the Bible is that we are born, here on earth, into the natural, and that, being here, we are given the opportunity of being born anew upwards or "from above" into the spiritual. Broadly speaking, two sorts of life are open to a man: the life in which there is a recognition of a duty towards God, together with an honest purpose to fulfil the same; and, again, the life from which it is attempted to leave out the thought of a God and of an hereafter altogether. We all know people of whom we should say that if there were no life beyond this one, and in this life no occasion for putting up with unpleasant realities and bearing unwelcome burdens, they would seem to be the very men and women for whom the universe had been especially established. They fit into Nature so admirably; their sensibilities are so excellently attuned to all the sights and sounds of earth; they are such adepts at using their faculties, so adroit, so ready, so quick to see what tact demands, so able to do it gracefully when seen, that although we may know them to be utterly selfish at heart, wholly incapable of costly sacrifice or high endeavor or generous devotion, it is impossible not to admire them and difficult not to envy them. These are the children of this world, we say; and if this world were all, what better could we wish than to be of their company while life lasts? But turn from such a picture as that, and look for a few moments at the

face of an aged woman who, in the school of Christ, has been learning these many years such lessons as He has to teach. Perhaps she is some kinswoman of yours and you know her well. Her beauty is gone, as David has it, because of trouble; her face is seamed and furrowed with the lines of care; sorrow has set its ineffaceable seal upon the brow, and the eye has lost the flash and gleam that once belonged to it; but in the placid smile you see a beauty wholly different in kind from anything that greets you elsewhere; her quiet cheerfulness seems to bear you up upon its wings, and from her very presence there breathes out the blessing of eternal peace. She has forgotten self, she is living for you and me. Is it to be supposed that the natural ever develops itself unaided into this? Never. This is the victory of the spiritual. This was not born of Nature, but has been added to it. For "that is not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy." Cultivate nature, say some, and then at your leisure you can refine it into spirit. But that is not what the Bible says. The doctrine of the Bible is that by the grace—that is to say, by the communicated help—of Him who made us, we pass from the lower range to the higher, from the rank of first among the animals to that other rank which springs from membership in the family of God, servants no longer, but children, and children who are at home in their Father's house.

To illustrate this change, the Bible writers use various figures of speech, parables of one sort and another, but the one that made the deepest impression on the mind of the early church was our Lord's similitude of

the new birth. "Verily, verily, I say unto thee," ran his words to Nicodemus, "except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." A new life, that is to say, befits the child who is to be heir of heaven. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. You cannot transmute the one into the other, but the other must be added to the one. It is not that nature is discarded as a thing that ought not to have been; rather it is that nature is made the basis, the ground-work, the foundation upon which the spiritual structure shall be built.

The butterfly flitting about in the sunshine is a far lovelier object than the worm crawling in the dust; but the regeneration, the new birth of the chrysalis never could have taken place had there been no worm; for it is just as essential, apparently, to man's perfection that he should have a nature as it is that his nature should be glorified by the touch and presence of the Spirit. I might multiply illustrations and dwell on them, but to do so would keep me from my main points, which are, first, to show that the Episcopal Church does really lay great stress upon the change of heart which is necessary before men can be pleasing to God; and secondly, to explain how it has come about that among Christian people in America the opposite is so generally believed.

For the thorough establishment of the first point—namely, the fact that the Episcopal Church does hold to the importance of a very real change—one single quotation from the Prayer-Book will suffice. In the opening exhortation of the service appointed for the Baptism of those of riper years, we read: "Dearly Beloved, forasmuch as all men are conceived and born

in sin (and that which is born of the flesh is flesh), and they who are in the flesh cannot please God, but live in sin, committing many actual transgressions; and our Saviour Christ saith none can enter into the Kingdom of God except he be regenerate and born anew of water and of the Holy Ghost: I beseech you to call upon God the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ, that of his bounteous goodness He will grant to this person that which by nature he cannot have."

Nothing could well be plainer than this; here is abundant evidence that the Episcopal Church does teach with great emphasis the necessity of a change of some sort before man can be considered as having been, so to say, set right with his Maker.

The way, therefore, is clear for passing on to inquire why it is that this Church should have been so very widely misunderstood and misrepresented in the matter.

I believe the main reasons to be these:

First. The fact that the Church does not require, and never has required, of candidates for admission to its membership, that they fix the date of their "change of heart," by assigning it to a definite day, or week, or month, or year.

Secondly. The fact that no statement of his personal experience is demanded of the candidate either publicly or semi-publicly, the whole matter being left in the hands of the pastor as the people's spiritual guide, and the decision allowed to hinge largely upon the good faith and conscience of the individual himself.

Thirdly. The fact that in the ritual of the Church, "regeneration" seems to be bound up so intricately

with the sacrament of Baptism that the two would appear to be considered as substantially one and the same thing.

Fourthly. The fact that the communicants of the Church show no signs of being different in aims and modes of life after their Baptism, or their Confirmation, from what they were before.

Such I believe to be the popular reasons, certainly the most widely diffused popular reasons, for believing that the Episcopal Church does not maintain or teach the necessity of a change of heart. The consideration of the last of the four must be postponed until the general topic of "worldliness" shall have come up for consideration, but the other three may be taken in hand at once.

And, first, as to the matter of assigning a date to the period of one's having become a Christian. The secret of the Church's reluctance so to fix a time lies partly in her reverence for that mystery with which it has pleased God to shroud the beginnings of all life; partly in her fear lest she tempt people into being hypocritical; and partly in the immense value which she attaches to Christian nurture.

"The wind," says our Lord, "bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." But if we cannot tell whence it came, how can we possibly tell when it began? Or, to put a question still more to the point: If we feel it blowing, why do we need to know when it began? There is more in human nature than is included within the horizon of consciousness.

But waiving this point, look at the question of Chris-

tian nurture. This is something in which the Episcopal Church believes with its whole heart. Whether rightly or wrongly, this Church insists that the true way to bring up children is to treat them as Christian children from the outset, and to try to make them realize from the earliest dawn of their intelligent life that the obligations of a Christian are resting on them. Of course, I do not mean by this that we would seek to make of them precocious religionists, premature saints. Much the contrary. Childhood has its own type of religion, just as youth, manhood, and old age have theirs. Childhood, if it is to be rightly religious, must be religious after its own sort; but the religion of the child, if genuine, will be just as beautiful, just as symmetrical, as the religion of the tempted and victorious saint. The little crocus of the early spring is as perfect in its measure as the stately lily. The Episcopal Church believes in this; it believes in the slow and gradual superadding of the spiritual to the natural, until we have as the result a mature Christian character, the stability of which can be depended upon in all weathers. Of course, it is little that the Church can do through its ministry and its public services to bring all this to pass, unless it have the hearty and patient coöperation of fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, sponsors and Sunday-school teachers. Hence results fall far, far short of what the theory might lead us to expect. But the results, meagre as they are as compared with what they might be, are enough to encourage all who give attention to them. Whatever is bright, whatever is cheerful, happy, or wholesome, children can easily be taught to love, and these are the things which this Church seeks to make

foremost in the religion of the children intrusted to her care.

As the graver and sadder aspects of life dawn on them, the children thus trained will have something to fall back upon, something to encourage them, something to save them from gloom, despondency, and shipwreck. Entertaining, as she does, these convictions about the spiritual growth of children from infancy to maturity, the Church naturally shrinks from any too great particularity as to the time when the change passed upon any given heart that made it a heart subject to God's grace. The important point is, Is it such a heart? If it be, the question when it became such is of far lesser moment. "Howbeit, that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual"—yes, afterward, but how long afterward? Who shall presume to say?

I think I am speaking the mind of most pastors of souls, whether they be in the orders of the Episcopal Church or not, when I affirm that those Christian characters are, as a rule, more to be depended upon for wear, which have been the fruit of gradual growth, than those are which have sprung from sudden conversion. Of course, there have been and are striking exceptions, but the rule holds.

I spoke of the fact that this Church leaves the responsibility of admitting persons to its membership wholly to the good faith and conscience of the minister and the candidate himself, as furnishing another explanation of the popular error we have under review. Let us look at this. It is perfectly true that the Episcopal Church does not summon a man before

a committee of his neighbors in order to ascertain whether he be spiritually minded or no. But do we find that the Lord Jesus Christ ever required this of people, or anything like this, as a condition precedent of discipleship? Do we find that any one of the Apostles, in his administration of the affairs of the Church, ever did so? If we do, then certainly the practice ought to be kept up; but if we do not, then let us lay no heavier burdens on men's shoulders than Christ laid on them.

There were certain things which our Saviour and the disciples did require. What were they? Open acknowledgment of belief in Christ was one. "Whosoever shall confess me before men," said Jesus, "him will I also confess." The Episcopal Church requires this of all who seek her membership. Nothing could well be more open and public than her appointed modes of confessing Christ. If any one either makes or ratifies the solemn promises of Baptism insincerely, if he takes words upon his lips which in his heart he does not mean, the guilt is upon his own conscience, he sins against the light, he must bear the burden and reap the punishment known as the portion of the hypocrites. But if, on the other hand, a person does honestly say that he is desirous of making and keeping the vows of the Christian life; if he says this, moreover, after patient and careful instruction has been given him (and perhaps some of those who allow themselves to speak slightingly of Confirmation as an "empty form" are not aware of what pains-taking preparation is commonly made for it weeks in advance) —if, I say, we have before us a person who is willing, knowingly and deliberately, to answer for himself the

solemn questions: Dost thou repent? Dost thou believe? Wilt thou obey?—ought we not to consider the fact as evidence, in itself, that in this case "spirit" has begun to act on "nature" and the face been set right toward God?

St. Paul declares that no man can say (say honestly and understandingly, of course, he means) that Jesus is the Lord "but by the Holy Ghost." Well then, here in the case supposed is one who does say that "Jesus is the Lord," who says it with every appearance of honestly meaning it, and who affirms, moreover, that it is in his heart to serve and follow this Lord, this Saviour, this Master, while life lasts. Is the Episcopal Church at fault that she says to this person, if he have never been sacramentally adopted into the congregation of Christ's flock: "Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins;" or if she pray for him in Confirmation: "Defend, O Lord, this thy child with thy heavenly grace; that he may continue thine for ever, and daily increase in thy Holy Spirit more and more, until he come unto thine everlasting kingdom"?

And this leads me naturally to speak of the intimate connection recognized in the Episcopal Church between Baptism and regeneration.

The two are associated together, not because it is believed that the sprinkling of a little water and the pronouncing of a few words are efficacious to bring about a "moral change" in the heart of the infant brought to the font. The whole House of Bishops has, by formal vote, repudiated that notion.* But just as the ceremony of marriage defines a point of time at

* See "Journal of the House of Bishops," in the Report of the General Convention for 1871.

which there is public recognition taken of that mutual love of two persons which makes the real sacredness of marriage, so is the administration of Baptism the public recognition, in the case of any given candidate, be he child or man, that here is one who is entering on the new life. "What!" some one exclaims; "that little, unconscious infant entering on the new life?" "Yes," we answer, without fear; "even so. We mean to take it for granted, in bringing this child up, that he is the child of God, and not the child of hell. The Church is willing to incur the risk, and, if you please, to bear the blame. The child may turn out badly, but he shall not have it in his power to say bitterly in the hour of his ruin that it has come upon him because he was given a bad name at the start."

Yes, the Episcopal Church believes in a change of heart; I should be still nearer right if I said she believes in many changes of heart, repeated changes of heart, whenever there is call for them. Alas for any system of religion which supposes that a single change of heart will, in every case, suffice! Besides the one great change of attitude which is implied in turning to God, how often is there need that we turn again from following our own desires and seeking our own pleasures to find anew the way of life!

III.

THAT IT IS GIVEN OVER TO WORLDLINESS.

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Nothing is more necessary in discussing "worldliness" than to be careful in our choice of words, lest before we know it we do ourselves an injury by doing others an injustice. There is a way of loving the world which is not only innocent, but actually God-like; again, there is another way of loving the world which drags the soul down to its ruin. We emulate the divine love of the world whenever we let the heart go out in honest pity and compassion toward the sinning, sorrowing, toiling people, God's creatures and our fellow-creatures, of whom the world is full. We fall, on the other hand, into the bad way of loving the world whenever we let things win the precedence of persons in our heart's affections, whenever we allow getting to absorb our thoughts to the forgetfulness of being; whenever, in short, we suffer the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life to enter like a murky cloud at the windows of the soul and fill with their bad presence every nook and corner of the room within. Always, and by all means, we are to shun "worldliness" as we would the plague; only let us know what we shun.

Every one of us has a pretty definite notion of what is meant by the expression, "the things the world can give a man." Well then, does not the essence of worldliness lie just here, namely, in caring more for these "things" which the world can give a man, than for truth, for righteousness, for purity of heart, or for the peace of God?

"Worldliness" may take on various forms and fashions; the inordinate love may be a love of popularity, or it may be a love of money, or a love of dress, or a love of pleasure, or a love of power: the thing that makes it worldliness is the fact that it is a love which has overridden and usurped the place of the love of God. And here we touch a point of real moment. How many people there are who, in judging of this question of worldliness, carelessly confound symptom and disease, forgetting how very untrustworthy outward appearances often are. They see one neighbor well dressed; they see another a general favorite in society; they see a third rapidly accumulating a fortune; they see a fourth who, endowed with a keen sense of enjoyment, appears just now to be getting a great deal of happiness out of life, and though perhaps they know absolutely nothing of what is actually going on in the hearts and consciences of the persons observed, the charge which rises instinctively to the lips is this sweeping one of "worldliness." Because the man is well dressed, because popular, because prosperous, because light-hearted, therefore he must be "worldly." It is a quick and decisive sort of reasoning, but is it the logic of the Sermon on the Mount? Did Christ bid us judge the tree after any such fashion? Indeed, did He not indirectly warn us against this very thing?

A thousand accidental circumstances may affect the look of the leaves; the real questions are: What of the root? and, What of the fruit? No doubt the man you criticise may be worldly, he may be verily eaten up with worldliness; only do not assume such to be the fact, do not make his unproved worldliness the basis of all your interpretations of his character and his doings, until you have some better evidence than is afforded by the mere looks. "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment." The question is: Where are the affections really set, and on what? Worldly men in tatters on the curb-stone may sometimes fling the envious curse after the carriage wheels of holy and humble men of heart.

This blunder of confounding the symptom with the sickness has been common in all ages. Among the anchorites and ascetics of the early Church, for instance, it seems to have been generally considered that personal cleanliness was a form of worldliness. This, to our modern eyes, looks extraordinary, but it admits of an easy and natural explanation. The public baths were a prominent feature of the machinery of luxury in the polite society of those days. They corresponded in a measure to the casino of modern Europe. To frequent the baths was to be brought into continual contact with heathen usages, and out of this wise avoidance of what was bad, grew an unwise avoidance of what was good. Esteeming it a dictate of piety to differ from the heathen as widely as possible, these well-meaning but misguided enthusiasts came to the conclusion that to be ragged and uncleanly would be to establish sanctity.

Again, it is a mistake to suppose that we can avoid

falling into worldliness by running away from people, and from the places which people frequent.

"What exile from himself can flee?"

It is in the self that the real worldliness resides, and self we carry with us whether we tread city streets or country roads. "He hath set the world in their hearts;" that is where the real taint of worldliness lurks; would you kill it in yourself, trace it to that source. A Londoner or a Parisian, looking in upon the daily life of some quiet, well-ordered little provincial town, might ask with a smile: What can be the possible temptations to, or opportunities for worldliness here? Again, one of the people of this very town visiting some out-of-the-way village in a secluded corner of the country might in the same spirit ask the same question. And yet who that has given the matter any serious thought will doubt that the certainty of finding worldliness somewhere in the village is equal to the certainty of finding unworldliness somewhere in the city, or that both certainties are real certainties? No, it does not matter whether a community be made up of many families or few, whether the buildings in which it is housed be of stone or of brick or of wood, whether the people meet together frequently or rarely, whether they dress expensively or cheaply—given one single human heart and you have a soil in which the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life may thrive, blossom, and bear fruit.

Let us consider, then, what would be the symptoms, the outward and visible tokens of this sickness in case a Church were really infected with it. What sort of evidence, that is to say, would justify us in fastening

the charge of "worldliness" upon any large body of Christians as a whole? Well, let us begin with the ministry. The priests of a religion are supposed to be the exponents of it. If their standard of right living be low, we cannot reasonably expect that of their flocks to be much higher. It is fair, then, to make the ministry of any Church, to some extent, at least, a criterion by which to judge the Church itself. If the ministry of any Church can be shown to be idle, luxurious, given to trifling pursuits, greedy of gain, more bent on making a living than on making a life out of the work of shepherding the flock of Christ, why, then, it may fairly be inferred that into such a Church worldliness has crept. There have been times in the life of the Church of England, for example, to go no further afield, especially in that dismal period of her history covered by the reigns of the four Georges, when such a charge might with justice have been brought. Had English bishops in the last half of the last century been caring more about the souls of their people and less about the revenues of their sees; had English rectors and vicars kept better in mind that fair ideal of what a priest should be which the first of English poets sketched in the Canterbury Tales, the followers of John Wesley would, in all likelihood, be to-day within the Anglican Communion instead of without it. Take the clergy of the Church of England now, and we may proudly challenge for it collectively, and as a body, comparison with any clergy in Christendom, whether as regards learning, faithfulness in the cure of souls, or general elevation of character; but the heritage of ill-repute handed down from the generation before the last has proved a sad burden this many a year. And

probably there are not a few worthy people who at the present moment are firmly persuaded that in the established Church of England there is not a bishop who is not arrogant and purse-proud, not a country parson who does not habitually drink with the squire and follow the hounds across the farmers' fields, not a curate who is not coveting by day and dreaming by night of possible preferment. Such force has the old tradition of bad times to mar the good report of present excellence! I have taken this illustration of a way in which the worldliness of a Church may betray itself through the lives of its clergy from the history of the Anglican Communion, not because I might not have found instances elsewhere, but because of a strong desire to avoid any, even the slightest, appearance of trying to make out a case.

Suppose, now, we go on to consider some of the ways in which the worldliness of a Church may find expression in the lives of the people who make up its congregations and are enrolled on its lists. One such indication would certainly be the general prevalence of a low standard of honor, of integrity, and of social purity. When we see people habitually giving themselves up to the gratification of their appetites, bending their whole energy, or such flabby semblance of energy as they have, to the attainment of comfort, incapable of any conversation above the level of gossip and scandal, showing no sign of lofty aspiration, of earnest purpose, of unselfish motive, we may fairly and without breach of charity set them down as worldly. And this sort of thing, if it could be proved to be characteristic of a Church as a whole, would certainly stamp such Church as worldly. But is it a

sort of thing which exclusively characterizes any one denomination of Christians in this republic of ours? I think not. Faithful inquiry would probably bring out the fact that whenever wealth abounds in any given community, and more especially newly-acquired wealth, the vices of luxury, indolence, selfishness, and the fondness for display will also abound, and that, too, quite, or almost quite, independently of the circumstance that this or that form of Christianity happens to be dominant there. That the Episcopal Church is wholly free from the low breeding and vulgarity which force themselves noisily and showily upon the ears and eyes of men, God forbid that I should assert. Only this I say: "Let that Church which is without sin among you cast the first stone at her." Instead of mutual recriminations, what we want is that all good Christian people everywhere should join hearts and hands in the effort to frown down, to laugh down, and to make disreputable all violations of that standard of modesty, quietness, and self-restraint which ought to be reckoned the common law of Christendom.

Another way in which a Church may show itself involved in the sin of worldliness is by turning a cold shoulder upon the poor. Happily, we have in this country, as yet, no such thing as a peasant class. "The poor" as a fixed and recognized body do not exist among us, simply because under the working of our social system the poor of to-day may be the rich of to-morrow, and the rich of this year the poor of the next. Still, it remains true that the poor in one sense we have always with us, and still it remains true that the Church of Christ owes to the poor precisely the same amount of care, watchfulness, and consideration

that it owes to the rich. But the great danger of society, Christian society I mean, in its relations to the poor, is not so much that it will deliberately trample on their feelings, wantonly insult them, or purposely injure them—not so much this, as that it will simply forget them. And this is what I meant by saying that a Church betrays worldliness when it turns a cold shoulder on the poor. It is so easy to forget those who are not conspicuous. The Psalmist in a moment of despondency seems to have felt as if even Jehovah Himself were in danger of this lapse: "Forget not," he cries, fervently, "the congregation of thy poor."

The ways in which a Church has it in its power to bless and help the poor are numerous. The most obvious one is that of making the House of God as accessible as possible. The Church is bound to see to it that the excuse, "I cannot worship God in public because I have no money," be taken out of the mouth of every man that breathes. Whether what is known as the "free-church system" be or be not the best method of bringing this end to pass is an open question. I merely note in passing that a bad sort of worldliness in a Church is that which forgets all about asking whether the poor have or have not the Gospel preached to them.

But not merely floor room for the poor on Sundays: the unworldly Church will be bound in conscience to furnish more than that. Hospitals, orphanages, homes, refuges—these are the things the Church ought to build and endow and look after, if it would do its whole duty to society. A Church which is a praying and preaching Church only, will with great difficulty save itself from becoming a worldly Church. "Lord,

Lord, did we not prophesy in thy name?" is a plea that sounds religious as well as plausible, but we have good authority for believing that alone and by itself it will not be accepted at that day. The "Come ye blessed of My Father" is reserved for those who have remembered the hungry and thirsty, the stranger, the prisoner, and the sick. The Church which, in a quiet, unostentatious way, shall succeed here in America in doing the most of this sort of thing will best deserve the title of unworldly.

Another way in which the laity have it in their power to defile a Church with worldliness is in the management of its financial affairs. I speak, of course, of those Churches in which the control of the revenues is, as it should be, in the hands of the laity. Illegitimate methods of raising money for sacred purposes, criminal recklessness in the contraction of debts, and almost criminal tardiness in paying them—these also are among the tokens of worldliness of which, in making up our judgments, we shall do well to take note. The reason why these things indicate worldliness is because they show that the hearts of the people are not in the object for which the Church exists. Men who are in earnest about accomplishing a purpose seldom go to work circuitously to raise the needed means. If a mill is to be built, no elaborate scheme is first contrived for indirectly getting the necessary funds from other people without their knowing that they have contributed. And yet how much wheedling and coaxing and indirect taxation and mitigated gaming is carried on in the name and for the supposed advantage of the Church of Jesus Christ! It is all wrong. The treasury of God is not really replenished by any such

remittances as these. Only so much money as is given from the heart and at the dictate of the conscience is ever really given to God. Churches built to glorify the builder, and churches built to enhance the value of landed property in the neighborhood, remain private houses, though you consecrate them ten times over and plaster them from floor to ceiling with polychromatic emblems of the Faith. And what applies to the building of church edifices applies to the use and maintenance of them when built. An unworldly management of the temporal affairs of a Church does not mean an unbusiness-like management of them. Far from it! On the contrary, an unworldly administration of church affairs means such an administration that the keenest man of business you can find, looking on with a critical, nay, even with an unfriendly eye, shall not be able to put his finger anywhere and say scornfully, There is a blot. No; give us stainless honor in the management of all that pertains to the temporal interests of the Church of God, and unworldliness is so far forth secured.

And now, does the reader expect me to maintain that the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States is wholly and entirely above reproach as respects all these points which have been touched? Even if I thought so, it would be most unseemly and ill-judged of me to make the boast. But honestly I do not think so, and, therefore, while fully appreciating the power which reckless and unlimited assertion gives to the champion of a Church, I cannot say so. Personally, I entertain no doubt that the Episcopal Church is open to serious censure on the score of worldliness. That many of her members are living selfish, luxurious,

aimless lives is true. That her clergy, all of them, fall far short of what the ministers of Jesus Christ ought to be in diligence, in devoutness, in sympathetic ministration to the needs of men, is true. That she does far less than she ought, to encourage, bless, and care for the poor, the sick, and the prisoner, is true. That her temporal interests are in many instances administered from worldly motives and in worldly ways is true.

But when it comes to singling out the Episcopal Church for especial blame in these respects; when, for example, it is alleged of the Church that it is "notorious for worldliness;" then its friends are thrown into the attitude of defence, and words which might otherwise seem boastful become natural. Yet even from such natural boasting, if we may call it such, I would rather refrain, although the precedent of an apostle might be claimed for indulging in it. There was a pleasant mixture of satire and of compliment in the text with which a minister of another communion once prefaced a sermon eulogistic of the Episcopal Church: "Let another man praise thee and not thine own mouth; a stranger and not thine own lips." But some things which may not be said in boastfulness may rightly be said in thankfulness. Churchmen have reason to feel profoundly thankful that all over the land there seems to be a general waking up to the fact that the Church is nothing unless it be a working Church; that it cannot be in any real sense the "Body of Christ," unless, like Him, it be going about doing good. In the providence of God it has come to pass that this Church has within its fold a very large proportion of poor. With the exception of the Roman Catholics, there is, I sup-

pose, not one among the larger Christian denominations which, in proportion to its size, numbers so many of the very poor. In doing our duty by those whom God has given into our charge, we shall, as a people, find the best possible antidote to worldliness. In addition to our poverty, we have also, as a Church, more especially in the larger cities, a great deal of wealth. Behold, then, the opportunity! Wealth is often, not always, the indication of intelligence. That wealth is found in a church is, therefore, no reproach to it, provided the wealth represents intelligence. Poverty, on the other hand, is often an inherited misfortune; often, not always, the fruit of undeserved calamity. That poverty is found in a church is a call for sympathy. That the intelligence of the land should be taught to be sympathetic with the poverty of the land, is confessedly our greatest need. Alarm about the stability of social order would largely abate if only between classes there lived a better understanding, if only there were more sympathy in the air. Forgetting, then, and casting away that love of the world which kills the soul, be it the Church's aim to catch that higher love of the world which moves to sacrifice, the love wherewith God loved it when He gave his Son.

IV.

THAT IT IS NARROW AND EXCLUSIVE.

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It is sometimes alleged in disparagement of the Episcopal Church that it is narrow and exclusive. The charge is a vague one and admits of a large variety of constructions. "Narrow" and "exclusive" are relative terms. They may be used in a bad sense, and again they may be used in a good sense; it depends upon the thing one happens to be describing. "Narrow is the way that leadeth unto life," said Jesus Christ. Nobody, however "liberal" he may be, ventures to call in question that statement, ventures to deny that here, at least, is one sort of narrowness which is praiseworthy. Again, we find it written of the City of God, that "there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination or maketh a lie." Here we have, in the plainest possible words, the laying down of a law of exclusion, but it is an exclusiveness which we all of us acknowledge to be just. So, then, we must know to what substantive these adjectives are to be prefixed before we adjudge them necessarily bad. When we hear a church called "narrow and exclusive," we need to be informed, before condemning it, wherein such church is narrow, and of what it is exclusive. The mere epithets, apart and of themselves, prove nothing. Liberality is a most attractive char-

acteristic. We should all of us like to be believed and to be called liberal. Only we must remember that there may be such a thing as winning this praise at too great a cost. A man does not prove himself to be free-hearted simply by making free with whatever is within his reach. Giving away trust funds is not liberality, however much it may wear for the moment the look of it. "O, Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust," was an Apostle's advice to one of his successors. The young man may have been reckoned illiberal for following it, but he did right.

The accusation that the Episcopal Church is "narrow" probably has reference to its doctrine. What it means is that the Church, as a Church, is to blame for allowing itself to be tied up to certain fixed and unchangeable forms of faith in such a way that it cannot adapt itself to the shifting opinions of the times. The narrowness complained of is a dogmatic narrowness. The "exclusiveness," on the other hand, probably has reference rather to polity and discipline than to doctrine. Why do you insist on having people confirmed before you enroll them as communicants? Why cannot our ministers preach in your pulpits? These are the unspoken questions which, in most instances, are lying latent in the minds of those who express the opinion that the Episcopal Church is "exclusive." It will be well, therefore, to take up the two points in their order; first the narrowness, and after that the exclusiveness.

The thing that makes the Episcopal Church seem narrow with respect to doctrine is the exceeding tenacity with which it clings to certain articles of the faith which it accounts, whether rightly or wrongly,

to be the foundation stones of the Christian religion. There are in existence two short summaries of religious belief which, on the combined grounds of antiquity and universality of reception, claim precedence of all other existing creeds. One of them is known popularly as the Apostles' Creed, and the other as the Nicene Creed. The first of them is of unknown antiquity, being one of numerous similar creeds that enjoyed recognition in the primitive Church. The second of the two, the Nicene Creed, named from the famous Council of Nicæa, at which the greater portion of it was set forth, has been in use in its complete form for fifteen hundred years. Both of them may be found in the Morning and Evening Prayer of the Prayer Book, and they have also place in the Communion service.

These creeds, which in reality are simply an expansion of the formula of Baptism, simply an unfolding of the Christian name of the one God—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—the Episcopal Church holds, and holds with a firm grasp, because of its conviction that if they were to be thrown away, it would be exceedingly difficult to find anything to take their place. "But what of that?" some one remarks. "Why trouble ourselves to find anything to take their place? Is not the Bible enough? Why should we care for any creed but that?"

God forbid that I should speak slightingly of the Bible. One may be well content to leave that sort of rhetoric to the "advanced thinkers" who slur the Book because of what it teaches, and to the promulgators of novel dogma who slur it because of what it teaches not. The one class find in it doctrines which are unpalatable, the other cannot find in it doctrines which

they would fain make palatable. Who can wonder that the two opposites should join hands in the endeavor to put the volume on the shelf? No, I have no wish to exalt the Creeds at the expense of the Scriptures; all my aim is to bring out as clearly as I may the important connection between the two. And here let me speak a word of caution. We are on perilous ground and must be exceedingly watchful how we tread. This is just the spot where the Roman controversialist is wont to catch the unwary Protestant at a disadvantage and to throw him in the twinkling of an eye.

Once concede to the Romanist his own definition of the right of private judgment, and he easily makes Protestantism ridiculous. His, the Romanist's, caricature of the doctrine of private judgment is to this effect; namely, that every man, after having been taught to read, is to be sent to the Bible, without note or comment, with a view of finding for himself a religion. Moreover, he is to do this with the conviction that the Holy Spirit will assuredly guide him, without human help, to an absolute and accurate knowledge of all the truth. There is little difficulty in bringing out in bright colors the absurdity of such a notion as this. Picture to yourself an ignorant man, able to read, indeed, but very poorly qualified to think or judge, and then imagine such a one asking, out of an awakened conscience, that question of questions, "What shall I do to be saved?" and being given in reply a Bible, simply a Bible, with no suggestion, no help, no guidance whatsoever—simply a Bible, stamped on the cover, let us suppose, with the words, "Search the Scriptures." He is as likely to open at the Second

Book of Chronicles as anywhere else. There is as good a chance of his stumbling upon the dark paradoxes of Ecclesiastes, as there is of his finding joy and light in the green pastures of the four Gospels. Or, perhaps, he decides to begin at the beginning, and before he has plodded half way through the Old Testament he has given up in despair all hope of ever discovering how his soul is to be saved.

Is it not a libel upon our common sense, when we are told that this is what "the right of private judgment" means?

At any rate, this is not the view of the matter taken by the Church whose position with regard to Christian doctrine I am endeavoring to illustrate and defend. This Church does offer help to any one who desires to know in few words what the substance of the Faith really is. There is no attempt whatever to fetter private judgment. There is not a shadow of coercion, or of anything like it. "Search for yourself, and study for yourself," this Church says to a man, "just as much as ever you please; only consider this, whether, on the whole, it will not be wise for you, in your searching and in your studying, to take into account the fact that the labors of the great bulk of the wise and good of former times have brought them to a certain conclusion; namely, that in these few statements, which make up what we call the Creed, the essence of the Christian faith is to be found." In the story of Philip the Deacon, and the Ethiopian eunuch, nothing is more suggestive than the questions exchanged between the two men. The eunuch sitting in his chariot, on his way from Jerusalem, was reading the Book of Esaias. It was all new to him. Probably

he had purchased the parchment in the city he had just left, and so far as knowing what it all meant was concerned, was in much the same attitude of mind as the modern seeker whose case we just now supposed. Philip's question, therefore, was very much to the point, for it ran thus: "Understandest thou what thou readest?" But equally to the point was the eunuch's prompt reply, "How can I, except some one should guide me?" The man was exercising the unquestioned right of private judgment in reading the book he had bought. Whoever should have attempted to take his copy of the prophet Esaias away from him by order of the chief priests would have been doing him an injustice. Still, did he not show a wisdom which was equal to his independence, when he not only did not refuse, but actually craved guidance? when he asked the Church in the person of Philip, one of its teachers, to give him such help as it could? The Anglican Church (and for lack of a better word I use the epithet "Anglican" to express a reality which is larger and less provincial than "Protestant Episcopal")—the Anglican Church recognizes the Bible as the great repository of religious truth, the armory of the weapons of the Spirit, the seed-plot of the spoken thoughts of God. This is said in so many words in the Sixth Article of Religion: "Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation, so that whatsoever is not read therein nor may be proved thereby is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of the Faith or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation." The Anglican Church, moreover, takes this ground without having at all lost sight of a point which Roman logicians are very fond of making, and

which too frequently disconcerts the Protestant mind unfamiliar with the thought—or, rather, the fact, that there was a Church before there was a Bible, and that the Proclamation was given to God's people before ever it was bound up in a Book. Protestants are apt to be startled by this reminder. They are so much accustomed to regard the Bible in its complete form as the sole and final court of appeal, they are so well satisfied with the formula, "The Bible and the Bible only, the religion of Protestants," that they forget the unquestionable fact that an Athenian citizen, for instance, who may have happened to be present on Mars Hill when Paul preached his famous sermon there, was just as much in possession of the inspired truth which the sermon contained as the other Athenian citizen who, twenty years later, or a hundred years later, read the same words written in manuscript, or as you and I, for that matter, reading it to-day out of our printed Bibles. Yes, there was a Church before there was a Bible; we need not be in the least degree afraid to concede so much as that. But be careful about the next step. For what is the next step? The next step is to ask us, Why, then, do you attend to the Book and not attend to the living voice of the Church by preference? Simply for this reason, and a very good reason it is. Note it carefully; it is all-important. Well-authenticated written evidence with regard to events long past—and the Christian religion, be it remembered, rests on events alleged to have taken place in the far past—well-authenticated written evidence with regard to events long past is always, by competent judges, regarded as more trustworthy than hearsay evidence. Tradition, and that is what this boasted living voice

of the Church is supposed to have preserved for us—tradition is hearsay evidence; it has its value, but it is a value not to be compared with that of Scripture. "The written word," says the old proverb, "abides."

We begin now to see our way to the reasons for the narrowness of the Episcopal Church with reference to doctrine; we begin to see why such immense importance is attached to the primitive Creeds. They represent that basis of belief upon which the Christian Church was once substantially agreed. They interpret Scripture in the sense in which the bulk of devout and learned minds have interpreted it from the first. They are the epitome, the condensed essence of the Bible. They indicate the drift of the whole thing. They form, so to speak, a table of contents, an index of principal topics, a conspectus of Revelation. They enshrine, as in a temple built of precious stones, the God whom Christians worship, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. So, then, the Church clings to the primitive Creeds, and will neither be frightened nor cajoled into parting with them. She is content to be laughed at on the right hand and on the left. On the left they come to her saying, "How narrow you are! Are you aware that all the old notions about religion are exploded? Are you acquainted with the fact that the argument from design is no longer tenable? Have you read the latest re-statement of the theory of evolution? And do you know that all intelligent people everywhere have given up even pretending to talk about a conscious Creator?" The Church's only reply is to go on repeating in the order of her worship, "I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth." I said "her only reply"—no, that is not

quite right; she does not lack able defenders of the faith that is in her, and never did she possess more of them than to-day. I ought to have said her most effective reply, for certainly no reply to fretful demands for change is more effective than simple persistency in that which is heartily believed to be true and good. "In quietness and confidence shall be thy strength."

But then, again, they attack her from the right, and they say, "How narrow you are! That old creed is well enough; we too, believe it; you will find it in the Missal, all recognized and acknowledged in due form. But is it possible that no one has apprised you of the fact that the Creed has been enlarged? We are living in times of movement, and if you would keep up with the progress of the Faith you must be on the alert. One of our cardinals affirms that 'the appeal to antiquity is treason.' The theory of development, so valuable as a working hypothesis in the region of natural science, has been applied in our times to religion, and fresh articles of belief may be looked for with as much confidence as new inventions. The Church cannot be expected to remain content with old forms of faith any more than the world can be expected to rest satisfied with the coaches and canal-boats of our grandfathers' times. We acknowledge that in the year 1853 heaven was still open to those who entertained pious doubts as to the then undecided question of the immaculate conception of the Blessed Virgin, but since 1854 heaven has been shut to such. In the year 1869 one who felt uncertain as to whether the Roman Pontiff, speaking *ex cathedrâ* upon matters of faith or morals, were infallible, might still cherish

the humble hope that he was at peace with God; but since the year 1870 such a one has been, by the voice of the Vatican Council, declared Anathema."

It is unnecessary to pursue this line of thought, and I should not have entered upon it but from a sense of duty. It is plain enough, without further illustration, why the Episcopal Church has chosen in this matter of doctrine the "narrow" way. She may be right, she may be wrong, but she believes it to be the way that leadeth unto life. She believes that the giving up of the old faith means the ruin of society, and she is averse to seeing that old faith either evaporated by liberalism or amplified by Rome.

We turn to the question of "exclusiveness." Upon this branch of the subject it will be necessary to be more brief. We undertook, it will be remembered, to look at the alleged exclusiveness both in its bearings on admission to the Communion, and in its relation to the controversy about Holy Orders. A few words must suffice for each. And, first, admission to Holy Communion. It is the generally received opinion in the Episcopal Church that Baptism with water in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, by whomsoever administered, and at whatsoever age received, admits a person into the visible society denominated in the Creed "the Holy Catholic Church."

But it is a small thing to be admitted into a society unless one avails himself of the privileges of membership, and is careful to live up to the rules. Confirmation is the opportunity given to those who, in their infancy, were by the act of friends placed in this sacred society, to come forward, when they have reached years of discretion, and recognize the promises made

for them as their own. By so doing they are qualified to enter upon the full privileges of a membership which has been theirs from the outset. Presupposing, therefore, as it always does, the faithful carrying out of its own system, this Church lays it down as the rule binding upon its own people that none shall "be admitted to the Holy Communion until such time as he be confirmed, or be ready and desirous to be confirmed." That this is a wholesome rule for a Church in which Baptism is believed to confer Church membership upon little children just as really as upon grown-up men and women, few will deny.

But now turn for a moment to the language of the Communion Office itself. How is the invitation worded? "Ye who do truly and earnestly repent you of your sins, and are in love and charity with your neighbors, and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God and walking from henceforth in his holy ways, draw near with faith and take this holy sacrament to your comfort." There is nothing very exclusive about that, save in so far as it is exclusive of sin and wickedness. But how are we to reconcile these two things, the largeness of the invitation, which would seem to be addressed to all who believe and have been baptized, and the express limitation imposed in another place as to admitting to the Holy Communion only those who have been confirmed?

There are various ways of harmonizing the two utterances, but perhaps it will be most satisfactory if I speak of that to which my own thought and observation have led me.* I have no right to speak for others.

* In explanation of the personal form which this paragraph bears, it is proper to state that the chapter originally did duty

However it may be elsewhere, here in this parish all baptized Christians, of whatever name or sect, who can with an honest conscience take part in a service worded as that of the Prayer Book is worded, are always welcome guests at the Table of the Lord. None has been "admitted to the Holy Communion" in the sense of having been recognized as a communicant of this Church until he has been confirmed; no names but those of confirmed persons appear upon the list of communicants in the parish register; but, on the other hand, no one to my knowledge was ever repelled from this altar rail on the score of not having confessed faith in Christ crucified in the form prescribed by the Protestant Episcopal Church. Observe, I do not allege that this is the view of the matter taken by all Episcopal clergymen. I simply say that it is a permitted view, a view widely entertained, a view uniformly acted upon in this particular parish. Neither would I be understood as speaking harshly of those clergy who think otherwise, or of those parishes where a different usage prevails. Between carefulness to maintain the purity of a communion and the desire to vindicate its charitable comprehensiveness, it must always be difficult to draw the line. The administration of this parish may have erred in the latter interest, as the administration of other parishes may have erred in the former. Men will judge differently in such matters. My main desire at the present moment is simply to state the fact as it is.

Still fewer words will suffice for that other form of

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as a parochial lecture addressed to the author's own congregation. It has been thought best, on the whole, to let the language stand unaltered.

alleged "exclusiveness," which shows itself in connection with the sacred ministry.

The Episcopal Church defines an ordained clergyman to be one who has been set apart by a bishop, with the laying on of hands and with prayer, for the ministry of God's Word and sacraments. These particular words and phrases are not quoted from any formulary; I am simply condensing in my own language what this Church says upon the subject. Observe, this Church does not say that there are no ministers but those so set apart; it simply defines the sort of ministry it intends within its own borders to recognize.

Now, then, putting aside for the moment all prejudice, all considerations of personal pique, and wounded feeling, and outraged sense of justice, and comparative estimates of the intellectual abilities and the devotional and moral worth of the several ministers of our acquaintance—putting aside all this, let us look for a moment at one undisputed historical fact. The fact is this, that five hundred years ago—and for our present purpose there is no occasion to go further back—five hundred years ago, the usage of recognizing as lawfully ordained clergymen only those who had been set apart by the authority of a bishop was universal throughout Christendom. At the time of the Reformation most of the Protestant communions, for reasons satisfactory to themselves, relinquished this usage. We, on the other hand, for reasons satisfactory to ourselves, chose to retain it. Wherein, then, lies the exclusiveness? It is others who have changed the custom, not we. We simply hold on to a feature of Church discipline which we believe to be essential to Christian unity. Why should those who have chosen

to let that feature slip, and have preferred to provide other methods of perpetuating the Christian ministry, blame us for holding to the way we have always held to? The Episcopal Church pronounces no judgment upon ordinations other than its own. It has no word of disparagement or rebuke for any ministry whatsoever that undertakes to set forth the truth of God, and to administer the things of the Kingdom. It quietly takes the ground that, in the midst of the multiplicity of sects, in the face of this seemingly infinite divisibility of Christendom, and in the face, too, of the widely spreading opinion that no ordination at all is as good as the best, if only one discovers in himself a genius for preaching, instead of trying to discriminate between ordinations, the best way is to follow the old rule, find fault with no one, and go straight forward. Is there anything so very unreasonable in an "exclusiveness" like this? It is not for us to show why we have adhered to, but rather for others to show why they have departed from, an ancient custom.

The truth is, the real spirit and temper of the Episcopal Church, so far from being exclusive, are markedly inclusive. No other reformed communion longs and prays and labors as she does for the unity of all who profess and call themselves Christians. These very features of her organization, which give so many observers from without an impression of her exclusiveness, are really the outgrowth of an intense desire to bring about reconciliation and reunion among the scattered sheep of Christ's flock.

If the Episcopal Church seems to worship and legislate as if there were no other denomination of Christians in existence, it is not from bitterness, or wrath,

or envy, or jealousy, or pride; least of all from any inability to recognize, or failure to appreciate, the innumerable instances of ministerial devotion, ability, and success beyond her own borders; but simply because nothing can persuade her that Jesus Christ meant that there should be more than one Church, and she feels bound to speak and act, to teach and to administer on that basis.

She may be all wrong. Her house may have been builded on the sand. God knows. But principles she has, and convictions, and by them she will stand or fall.

V.

THAT IT IS HONEYCOMBED WITH ROMANISM.

V.

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It is a popular opinion, at least in many parts of the country, that the Episcopal Church is a diluted form of Romanism, that it is simply Rome mitigated and modified, Rome with the rough edges smoothed off—in a word, Rome made easy for people who, lacking vigor and rigor enough to incline them to take up with the real thing, are still willing to enjoy a pretty imitation of it, if only the disagreeable and hard features be left out. I hope to be able to prove that such representations are misrepresentations. The Episcopal Church is "next door to Rome," that is true, but true, observe, in the same sense in which we say that Germany is next door to France. The two countries have a common frontier, but there are heavy fortresses dotted along the line, and although patches of territory may change hands, there is not the slightest prospect that the two governments will ever coalesce. It was this fact of proximity that won for the Church of England her proud title of the Bulwark of the Reformation. The bulwark, to be sure, is the nearest part of all the ship to the wave that beats against it, but the wave, remember, breaks as it strikes, and that is the end of the wave.

In attempting to show the groundlessness of the suspicion to which I have referred, I find two courses open to me. One way would be to vilify the Church of Rome and everything connected with it in such a manner and to such an extent as to convince the reader that although all the charges brought might not be just, a very large proportion of them must be true. This is a device for blackening the character of our neighbors, often successful in practice, but never commendable. It has too long been a generally accepted maxim of denominational etiquette, that while the preachers of the various Protestant communions are to be bound to say only civil things of one another, all shall be at liberty to throw as many stones as they will at the Pope and the cardinals. We are reminded in would-be justification of this one-sided comity, that Rome for her part has always been lavish of her curses, and quick to round with an anathema every sentence that falls from her lips. But have we forgotten Him who "when He was reviled, reviled not again"? Or have the exhortations grown obsolete, "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good"; "Bless, and curse not"?

Say what we will, the fact remains that by far the larger number of those millions whom we are proud to reckon as Christians when we are writing up the religious statistics of the globe are members of the Church of Rome. It may be an unwelcome fact, but the fact it is. To treat them as the enemies of the truth, the disciples of Antichrist, the dupes of the Evil One, may be a convenient method of disposing of them for controversial purposes, but it involves a sad shrinkage in the area of Christendom when we come to look at the map.

The Anglican Church, as a Church, has always taken a more charitable view of the matter. While stoutly resisting the encroachments of Rome in the field of ecclesiastical polity, and firmly protesting against Roman excesses in the line of doctrine, she has never read the Roman Catholics out of the pale of the Church universal, nor denied to the Bishop of Rome the jurisdiction that belongs to him in his own place—that is to say, in Rome.

The Church of England did, indeed, in the first heat of the Reformation, put into the Litany a petition that ran thus: "From the tyranny of the Bishop of Rome, and all his detestable enormities, Good Lord deliver us;" but the nation's sturdy self-respect was quick to detect in the words a touch of panic fear unworthy the calm composure that befits a book of prayer, and the deprecation was dropped. Instead, therefore, of taking up any line of hot invective, instead of trying to shower upon our fellow Christians of the Roman following sarcasms and bad names, all I shall attempt will be a calm and, so far as may be, a lucid statement, first of the points which the two churches have in common, and secondly of the points wherein they differ. Every reader will then be in a position to judge for himself, supposing my statements to be accurate and fair, whether the Episcopal Church be or be not "honeycombed with Romanism." It will be my endeavor not to understate the points of resemblance and not to overstate the points of difference.

First, then, how far do the areas occupied by the two churches overlap? What measure of agreement is there between the religion of the Missal and the religion of the Book of Common Prayer?

To begin with the most important point, the Faith, they agree in recognizing the value of the two great historic Creeds, that called the Apostles' Creed and that called the Nicene Creed. The first of these the Roman Church encourages her members to repeat along with their daily private devotions; to the second she gives a conspicuous place in the service of the Mass.

Having already glanced at the history of these Creeds and looked into their value as helps to the interpretation of Scripture, I need not dwell upon them now. With the simple remark that had Rome never added to these Creeds all might be well to-day, and Christendom at peace, I pass on to a second point of resemblance, which is this, that in both the Roman and the Episcopal Churches a stated ritual of worship is observed. This, perhaps, is what strikes the popular eye and impresses the popular mind more vividly than any other feature of similarity that could be named. There is, it is true, a very much more elaborate and, not to use the word offensively, a far more "showy" ceremonial in the one case than in the other. The burning candles on and about the altar, the smoking incense, the colored vestments of the priest, and, far more important than all these, the strangeness of the tongue in which the prayers are said, combine to give a very different impression from that conveyed by the comparatively plain and unadorned worship of the Episcopal Church. Still, the casual observer notices a certain resemblance which is undeniable; prayers are read from a book instead of being uttered extemporaneously, and the minister officiates in an attire which is not that of ordinary, every-day life.

Again, the two churches observe in common certain festivals and fasts, holy days and seasons. The methods of observance are, to be sure, very unlike, and many more such days are kept in the Roman than in the Episcopal Church, but that is a matter to which our "casual observer" naturally pays little heed. He remarks in his morning paper a notice to the effect that this being the Feast of the Epiphany, or this being Good Friday, or this being the Ascension Day, there will be services in the Roman Catholic and Episcopal Churches of the city at such or such hours, and he passes on to the next paragraph with the mental comment that, after all, the two Churches are so much alike that it would be a waste of time to try to find out what the petty differences between them may happen to be. Again, we hear of "bishops" in both Churches, and "dioceses." Now it is the Bishop of New York who holds an ordination, or administers confirmation; and now it is the Archbishop of New York who is reported as having done the same thing; and we are informed that one of these is a Roman Catholic and the other an Anglican ecclesiastic. So, then, it appears that both of these Churches have bishops who ordain candidates for the ministry, and who confirm baptized persons in anticipation of their admission to the Holy Communion.

And now, in the face of all these points of similarity, can you, asks some one, have the effrontery to affirm that any considerable gulf of difference separates the two Churches? Is not the Anglican religion really just that very thing—Romanism watered down?

I shall best answer the question by first calling attention to the distinctive principle which guided the

reformers of the Church of England in their memorable work, and by then proceeding to particularize certain points of difference which, it will be generally conceded, more than balance these striking features of likeness.

The great principle to which I refer as having governed the English reformers was that of retaining whatever there was of good in the old religion of the country, unless it could be shown that the good thing was one dangerously liable to be turned into an evil thing by the abuses of superstition. The fact that Roman precedent could be quoted in favor of any particular usage or observance was not by them held to be condemnatory of such observance or usage, provided it could be also shown that there was primitive precedent—precedent, that is to say, drawn from the life of the early Church—to justify it. The English reformers, for instance, no more felt bound to reject government by bishops as a feature of church polity because bishops had flourished under the usurped authority of the Pope, than they felt bound to give up the New Testament for the like reason. The Pope believes the New Testament. So with the other matters under review, the use of forms of worship, the hallowing of days and seasons, the wearing of ministerial vestments—all these things the Church-of-England reformers believed to be good in themselves and primitive in their origin, and, accordingly, all they did was to cut loose from them the parasitic growths that encumbered them, and to let them stand. In a word, the English Reformation, to use a homely but just illustration, was a cleaning of the old family silver, rather than a re-melting of it. The aim was to restore the

Church as nearly as might be to what it had been before the days of the papal usurpation; to get back, if possible, to the original constitution. Imagine, for example (if it be imaginable), a subversion of our own national Constitution for a series of centuries. Suppose a successful adventurer, in some crisis of our country's history, getting possession of supreme power, and governing the land upon the basis of just so much of the Constitution of the United States as he might choose to recognize and no more. Imagine this arrogated power, moreover, handed on for generations in the family of the first dictator, and gathering about itself more and more flagrant abuses with the lapse of time.

At last there comes a general rising on the part of a whole section of the country. Ten or fifteen States start up in protest, and say: "This is something which we can endure no longer; we must and will have civil liberty once more." But presently there is developed a difference among the protesting States themselves. Some of them say: "It is hopeless ever to try to have things as they were. Let us break with the past entirely and start afresh." But the people of New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, we will suppose for the purpose of our comparison, reply: "No; we purpose to have back again in its integrity and purity the Constitution of the United States as it was before the usurpation. That instrument has only been in temporary abeyance all these years; it has never actually died. Underneath the innovations and perversities of the false rule, that Constitution has lived on, it is living still; and whether you count us insane visionaries or not, we propose to restore it, or

at least to try, within our own borders, to live up to it ourselves. Who knows but that the whole country may even yet come back to it?" There you have the position England took in the Reformation. She was not to be frightened into breaking the precious bond of historical continuity that linked her to the Church of the first century. For three hundred years since that time, the rest of Christendom, including a large fraction of her own people, has been ridiculing her for the position she took. Men have reproached her for her "insularity," made sport of her "middle way," chided her for attempting a forlorn hope, pictured her as posturing with one foot on Geneva and one on Rome. And yet here she is to-day, occupying that distinctive, well-defined position of hers, taken up so carefully three hundred years ago—here she stands, neither Roman nor yet German, but, nevertheless, the chosen home of more English-speaking Christians than any other organized religious body that exists. I speak, of course, of the Anglican Communion as a whole, including not only the Episcopal Church of America, but the Episcopal Churches of England, Scotland, Ireland, and the Colonies as well. With their many local differences, these churches are all of them as one in their attitude towards Rome, and it is the attitude, be it noticed, not only of protest against what is distinctively Roman, but also of assertion of what is undoubtedly Catholic. "Catholic" is an inestimable word, never to be surrendered to any fraction of the Christian Church for its exclusive use. This is why, without intending the slightest discourtesy, I feel in duty bound, throughout, to speak of Romanists and Roman Catholics rather than of "Catholics." The

word Catholic means, literally, "universal" or "all-embracing." "Catholic" imports the opposite of what is provincial, and the opposite of what is temporary. "Catholic truth" means truth held by the whole Church, and held from the beginning. "Catholic usage" means a usage concerning which the memory of man runneth not to the contrary. "The Catholic Church" is that far-reaching society (far-reaching in both time and space) of which the apostles and prophets are the foundation, and Jesus Christ Himself the head corner-stone.

This, then, is the constitutional ground, to revert to our illustration, upon which the Episcopal Church builds, and perhaps no single short maxim better sums it up than the easily remembered one: "The true Catholic, no Romanist."

Now, then, we are in a position to look understandingly, though, of necessity, in a rapid way, at the main points of difference between the churches. We have seen upon what principles the English reformers made their protest; let us now count up the particular things they cast aside.

Foremost among these rejected tenets stands the doctrine of papal supremacy, the claim that the Bishop of Rome, and the local Church over which he presides, have the right to rule the entire flock of Christ. This claim rests upon three assumptions, no one of which admits of proof. Before allowing it, we must be convinced, first, that our Lord, when He said, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church," intended to establish a visible headship over his people for all time; secondly, that St. Peter ever was, as a matter of fact, the bishop of the Church of Rome;

and, thirdly, that any such supremacy as the one claimed was recognized as attaching to the see of Rome in the early ages of Christianity.

To the claim of supremacy there was added by the Vatican Council, in the year 1870, the further claim of infallibility in matters of faith and morals. The wording of the decree is as follows: "We teach and define that it is a dogma divinely revealed that the Roman Pontiff, when he speaks *ex cathedrâ*—that is, when, in discharge of the office of pastor and doctor of all Christians, by virtue of his supreme apostolic authority, he defines a doctrine regarding faith or morals to be held by the universal Church—by the divine assistance promised him in blessed Peter, is possessed of that infallibility with which the divine Redeemer willed that his Church should be endowed for defining doctrine regarding faith or morals, and that, therefore, such definitions of the Roman Pontiff are irreformable of themselves, and not from the consent of the Church. But if any one, which may God avert, presume to contradict this our definition, let him be anathema."

The Episcopal Church braves this anathema without the slightest fear; she unhesitatingly contradicts the definition and rejects both the claim to supremacy and the claim to infallibility as fictions of which the primitive Catholic Church, whose constitution she is aiming to restore, knew nothing.

The second important ground of difference between the Churches is the doctrine of the Holy Communion. This was the question which vied in importance with that of the supremacy in the controversies of the English Reformation. The Roman Church teaches

that after the officiating priest has spoken the words of consecration at the altar, a conversion is made of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of the body of Christ, and that it is right to pay to the Christ so present the same supreme worship that is due to Almighty God. When, therefore, the priest holds up in a gilded frame before the gaze of the congregation the consecrated wafer, the people bow the head and bend the knee in adoration. Roman theologians themselves admit that if the wafer so held up were really what to the eye it seems to be, a piece of bread, the act of bowing down in reverence would be plain idolatry; but they teach that the eye is deceived, that the bread is bread no longer, but true Christ, and that, therefore, the act of worship is both justifiable and right. The Episcopal Church, on the other hand, holds that the consecrated bread and wine of the Holy Eucharist are bread and wine still, and, in the language of the Communion Office, takes pains to refer to them as such. Hence, the Episcopal Church accounts the worship of the host to be idolatrous worship, and as such she, of course, rejects it.

Another point of lesser importance in this connection is the mutilation of the sacrament by the denial of the cup to the laity. The Roman arguments in defence of this confessedly non-primitive usage are singularly weak and evasive. The Episcopal Church disallows all such novelties, and ministers the communion in both kinds as was originally ordained by Him who said, "This do in remembrance of me."

People sometimes think they have made a startling discovery when they find that the Communion Service

of the Book of Common Prayer has much in common with the Roman Missal. But, before drawing hasty inferences from this fact, it will be well to observe carefully just what those things are which the Book of Common Prayer omits. No better breakwater against Roman error in the matter of the Holy Eucharist exists than is found in the Communion Service of the Episcopal Church.

The next point of difference has to do with the kinds and degrees of devotion, and the objects to which worship ought to be paid. The Roman Church assorts worship, so to speak, into grades and classes. First of all, there is the worship which is due to God in heaven, and to Christ as held up before the people in the Mass. This is the supreme worship, and they have a technical theological name for it, with which we need not burden our memories. Next to this comes the peculiar devotion due to the Blessed Virgin, the mother of our Lord, an intermediate variety of worship, less in degree than that owed to the Supreme Almighty One, and yet higher than the worship which is paid the saints. Another technical word is used to express this sort of adoration; we will not trouble ourselves with that. Again, there is prayer addressed to saints and angels, the messengers of God and the spirits of just men made perfect. This, in its turn, is designated by still another, to us, unfamiliar word.* Below all these in grade comes the sort of veneration due to images and relics, a reverential feeling alleged to be akin in kind, though of greater intensity,

* Perhaps, after all, it may be as well to give the names: they are "latria," "hyperdulia," and "dulia."

to that with which we regard keepsakes and mementos of those whom we have loved. No Roman Catholic, no well-informed Roman Catholic, would find fault, I think, with this statement of the teaching of his Church upon the subject of worship. Ignorance of these distinctions often leads Protestants to make charges which are easily refuted. And yet how foolish to suppose that the mass of a population can possibly, when it comes to every-day practice, draw any such accurate boundary lines between their varieties of adoration! When we see a man spending five times as many hours of prayer before the shrine of Mary as he gives to the worship of Almighty God, we are not much comforted by the assurance that it is only "hyperdulia." The Episcopal Church knows nothing of all this fine-spun classification of prayer. She sweeps the whole complicated fabric away by recognizing only one Mediator between God and man, and only one sort of worship, the worship which the creature pays to the Creator.

The Episcopal Church honors and reveres the Blessed Virgin as the one highly favored, the model of gentle womanliness, the pattern of sweet and holy motherhood. But here she stops, esteeming it sacrilege to go one step further; yes, worse than sacrilege, to transfer to the human mother the attributes of Him who is both human and divine.

Neither does the Episcopal Church forget or disregard the saints, those blessed ones departed, who stand in the light of God's countenance, having entered into his rest. But it is one thing to recall with gratitude the good examples of those who have gone on before, and quite another thing to offer prayer to the departed

souls themselves. This last we cannot do so long as we remember a certain paragraph in the last chapter of the Bible, which reads thus :

"And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not : for I am thy fellow-servant and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book : worship God."

There is one more of these points of difference about which I ought to speak, and that is a matter rather of discipline than of doctrine. I refer to what is known as "The Tribunal of Penance," or, more popularly, as the Confessional. The Roman theology reckons Penance one of the seven sacraments, and divides it into four parts ; namely, contrition, confession, absolution, and satisfaction. No Roman Catholic is allowed to receive the sacrament of the Holy Communion unless he has first received the sacrament of Penance. Time does not admit my either entering into the history or discussing the merits and demerits of Confession as a system. That the Confessional has been, and is to some extent, a means of ministering comfort and promoting genuine penitence for sin, there can be little doubt. That it is compassed around with many and great dangers is also clear. The verdict of the Anglo-Saxon mind upon the institution as a whole has been decidedly unfavorable, and there is no feature of the whole Roman system more offensive to what we may call the popular conscience of English-speaking communities than this.

The Episcopal Church recognizes no such sacrament as the sacrament of Penance, except to disallow it and

disown it. It is true that in recent years certain English Churchmen have introduced a modified form of the Confessional, and a few of their imitators upon this side of the water, a very few, have done the same. People ask, Why do not your authorities put a stop to it? The reason is easily given. The line between such confidential intercourse as ought to exist between pastor and people in matters spiritual—the line between this and formal confession, is such a shadowy and wavering one that any machinery of ecclesiastical legislation planned for the purpose of pulling up the tares would be only too likely to root out also the wheat with them. This much is probable, however, that were any clergyman of the Episcopal Church to attempt to enforce openly the Roman usage of making confession a prerequisite to communion, he would be called to account with exemplary promptness.

And now I must leave it to the reader's judgment to determine whether, in view of the number and the seriousness of the points of difference between the two Churches, the points of likeness are sufficient to prove the one to be a weak imitation of the other. The strength of the Episcopal Church lies in the fact that she possesses all, or almost all, of what is good and true in Rome, without being encumbered with what we cannot but account uncatholic accretions. Rome knows this, and there is nothing on earth she more cordially dislikes than Anglican religion. Infidelity she is always ready to meet, it offers so many opportunities of successful assault. Popular Protestantism she also cheerfully encounters and frequently discomfits in debate. But the Anglican walls have stood the

siege for three centuries, and never were the garrison in better spirits than to-day.

And this mention of a siege suggests what is, after all, the crying sin of Rome, her lust of dominion. The spirit of the old Roman Empire, whose genius for organization she has inherited, breathes from every pore of her huge bulk. In the very tones of her music we seem to catch an echo of the tread of the legionaries marching to conquest. The dream of empire floats before her eyes continually, and a fascinating dream it is. Men can die brave deaths, and women live out patient lives of self-denying toil, with the great thought for ever in the background of their minds,—we, too, are aiding in the Church's subjugation of the world ; ours is a portion of the joy of victory. Beside this figure of imperial make, this queen-conqueror, triple-crowned, marshalling her forces for attack, put now another picture. It is the figure of a woman, gentle-eyed and motherly, majestic in her bearing, but majestic with a dignity born rather of nature than of art ; unbedizened with tinsel splendors, robed in simple white. She wears no jewelled tiara ; she cannot frame the word Anathema ; but benignity is written on her brow, and in her tongue is the law of kindness. There she stands, reaching out one hand to guide and one to bless. The first picture is that of the self-asserting Mistress of all Churches ; the second, that of Holy Mother Church as Anglo-Saxon Christians love to think of her, pure, peaceable, and true, the Bride and Spouse of Christ.

VI.

THAT IT IS A HOUSE DIVIDED AGAINST ITSELF.

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The great need of American Christianity is unification. The civil system of the country has been so knit together that we are able proudly to declare it "an indestructible Union of indestructible States." Our commercial system also has become so completely welded, part with part, as to defy breakage. It is in the ecclesiastical system alone that we note the mortifying lines of fracture. One people as respects the administration of law, one people as respects the transaction of business, we are still many peoples as respects the endeavor to win supremacy for the faith of Christ. In religion, disintegration is our curse.

The new consciousness beginning to dawn in the heart and mind of the Episcopal Church is the consciousness of a special call to play an intercessory and mediatorial part in the needed work of a general reconciliation. What makes it possible for an Episcopalian to take this line of remark without subjecting himself to any just charge of arrogance, is the fact that he bases his peace-making effort wholly upon historical, and not at all upon personal grounds. He does not say, "Trust us as reconcilers, because

our ecclesiastics are so much more astute, our theologians so much more profound, and our communicant members so much more devout, than yours." He simply says: "Look at the history of Anglican religion, as a history, and judge for yourselves whether it do not give evidence of a greater power of inclusiveness, a more promising facility at comprehending a large variety of types, both of character and of action, than any rival system has ever, among the people of our own race, exhibited."

But the power to assimilate types and to comprehend varieties is the very gift which we demand of the intermediary who is to help us in this task of composing our differences. The unity of which American Christians are in search is a "live and let live" unity. They perceive that the shutting-out policy is what has brought us to our present broken estate. What they are reaching after is the Church that shall be intolerant of these two things, and of only these two things —first, wickedness; secondly, the denial of what is confessedly central to the faith. Purity of character, as estimated by the ethical standards of the New Testament; purity of belief, as tested by the primitive Creeds—these are the only points upon which a united American Church would find it needful to insist.

But the overtures ventured by the Episcopal Church in the matter of unity are met with merciless ridicule, on the ground that the theological divergences and party differences within its own borders are so marked as to have become notorious. "Physician, heal thyself!" is the not unnatural rejoinder of those to whom Churchmen address their affectionate invitations to reunion.

I propose to meet this rejoinder by taking the ground that it is the existence of these very divergences alleged, and the continuance of their existence *within* the Anglican communion, that gives to that communion its best right to make the plea it does.

It is popularly believed that the epithets "High Church," "Low Church," and "Broad Church" express characteristics which are the exclusive property of Episcopalians. This is a mistake. These expressions ought to be the common property of Christendom, for they represent phases of religion that are permanent. They are not the *peculium* of a "denomination;" they stand rather for differences in human character, in ways of thinking and feeling, as marked as those that distinguished Paul from Cephas, and Apollos from them both. The question is whether, in a truly national Church, which is what the American people are reaching after if haply they may find it, there ought not to be ample breathing-space for Paul and Apollos and Cephas. This thought is worth working out a little more fully in detail.

That man knows himself, and becomes known to others, as a being made up of intellect, of affections, and of will, is an obvious remark, and counts among the commonplaces. What is not so generally discerned or acknowledged is the fact of a causal connection between this threefoldness of human nature and the three varieties of churchmanship which the nicknames I have quoted make so familiar. High Churchmanship emphasizes the principles of authority, of governance, and of order. It stands for the function of the *will* in matters spiritual. Low Churchmanship emphasizes the value of states of mind, inward experiences, and

moods of feeling, in contrast with what is outward and sacramental in religion ; it inclines to be impatient of forms, and suspicious of ceremonial. It stands for the *affections.*

Broad Churchmanship emphasizes the importance of the critical faculty. It magnifies the sacredness of the search for truth, is eager to submit whatever can be so submitted to the test of argumentation ; and will never, without protest, hear reason disparaged. It stands for *mind.*

Let it not for one moment be imagined that in saying this I am classifying men. Nothing of the sort. To set it down that all strong-willed men must be High Churchmen, all large-hearted men Low Churchmen, and all clear-headed men Broad Churchmen, would be the foolishest of follies. So, then, be it understood that I am not speaking of persons, but of systems, when I say of High Churchmanship that it emphasizes will-power ; of Low Churchmanship that it emphasizes heart-power ; and of Broad Churchmanship that it emphasizes mind-power. But just as we say of one man that he is of a "nervous temperament," and of another that he is of a "sanguine temperament," without at all meaning to imply that the nervous man has no blood, or the sanguine man no nerves, so may we very properly characterize this or that school of Churchmanship according to the quality which we conceive to be dominant in it.

The point, however, which I am particularly anxious to make is this, namely, that in a great national Church all of these various ways of apprehending and practising religion ought to find place. A national Church wholly made up of High Churchmen, or wholly made

up of Low Churchmen, or wholly made up of Broad Churchmen, would be a misfortune, if it were not first of all an impossibility. Human nature being what it is, a Church could not become national that should begin by insisting upon all its members conforming to one or other of these three types. It has been the peculiar blessedness of the Anglican communion that in the providence of God it has escaped this lust of delimitation.

There have been times in the history of that communion when High Churchmanship has had the lead; other times when Broad Churchmanship has been clearly in the ascendant; still other times when Low Churchmanship has controlled things; but never a time, thank God, when any one of these has succeeded in utterly exterminating the other two.

Look now, in a large way, at the religious state of things in this Republic, and let us see what we see. First of all, there is the solid Roman Catholic communion, which is High Church, through and through, and out and out. So tremendous is the emphasis laid by this system upon the principle of governance, the importance of control, the sacredness of order, that a single person's will is allowed to dominate the whole society, and one throne has been invested with the attributes of supremacy.

Secondly, there are the great "Evangelical denominations," so called: the Congregationalists, the Baptists, the Methodists, and the Presbyterians. These are as consistently Low Church as the Roman communion is consistently High Church. With these, religion is eminently a thing to be "experienced" by each individual, alone and by himself. Anything like the thought

of corporate salvation, of being saved in the mass, so to speak, and because one belongs to the mystical body of the faithful, is hateful to them. The sacredness of the single soul's relation to God is what they cherish. So that this be jealously guarded, all matters of worship and sacramental privilege and ecclesiastical order may take their chances.

Then again, there are the "liberal Christians," as they delight to call themselves—a somewhat scattered multitude of people who incline to look at religion chiefly in its intellectual aspect, as a mode of thought. These souls are impatient of whatever is dogmatic, whatever is assumed to be settled and beyond controversy. They are for re-opening all questions at will, and protest against allowing "No Admission" to be placarded upon any of the doors of the mind. These inquiring spirits, taken collectively, make up what we may call the Broad Church.

So, then, it appears that it is not merely the "Episcopalians," but rather the entire Christian population of the country, who are to be classified as High Church, Low Church, and Broad Church.

The question arises, Are we prepared to give over the interests of American Christianity wholly and exclusively to any one of the three? Is it desirable that the religion of this country should be Romanized, or that it should be evangelicalized (if one may be pardoned such an awkward verb), or that it should be liberalized? There are many, and their number is increasing, who to this question are disposed to answer: No, it is to no one of these controlling influences that the Republic will consent to submit the moulding of its spiritual destinies. On the contrary, what is wanted

is a communion in which the orderly element, the emotional element, and the speculative element shall all have place, while yet to no one of them is permitted the unchecked sway and sweep that would enable it, at its good pleasure, to expel the other two.

It is because of its having gradually acquired, during a long history, this inclusive character, that the Episcopal Church is able without immodesty to volunteer its good offices in that effort to come to a better understanding which so many souls in all the communions are earnestly desirous of seeing set on foot. Such overtures would be impertinent indeed if this Church were really "a house divided against itself;"—but is it that? Come and see.

THE END.

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